

About Industrial Hemp

Industrial Hemp is NOT marijuana

Although they look very similar, Industrial Hemp is genetically different from marijuana

- Industrial Hemp is a distinct and different variety of the plant species *cannabis sativa* L
- Industrial Hemp contains minimal (less than 1%) amounts of tetrahydrocannabinol (THC), the primary psychoactive ingredient in marijuana
 - While marijuana cultivars typically contain 3% to 15% THC by weight, hemp cultivars contain only trace amounts (less than 1%)
- Because Industrial Hemp contains virtually no THC, it is not possible to get 'high' from Industrial Hemp

History of Hemp

- George Washington pushed for the growth of hemp. He grew hemp himself
- In colonial times hemp was a cash crop used to make rope and fabric
- Other U.S. Presidents known to have farmed hemp include Thomas Jefferson, James Madison, James Monroe, Andrew Jackson, Zachary Taylor, and Franklin Pierce
- Hemp production made up a significant portion of antebellum Kentucky's economy
- In 1937, the Marihuana Tax Act of 1937 was passed in the United States. It levied a tax on anyone who dealt commercially in cannabis, hemp, or marijuana
- It is thought that the reasons hemp was also included in this law were to destroy the U.S. hemp industry, with the primary involvement of businessmen Andrew Mellon, Randolph Hearst and the DuPont family
 - One claim is that Hearst believed that his extensive timber holdings were threatened by the possibility that hemp would become a very cheap substitute for the paper pulp that was used in the newspaper industry
 - Another claim is that Mellon, Secretary of the Treasury and the wealthiest man in America at that time, had invested heavily in DuPont's new synthetic fiber, nylon and believed that the replacement of the traditional resource, hemp, was integral to the new product's success
- The Marihuana Tax Act of 1937 was ruled unconstitutional by the Supreme Court and ultimately superseded by the Controlled Substances Act of 1970
- Hemp was used extensively by the U.S. during World War II. Uniforms, canvas, and rope were among the main textiles created from the hemp plant at this time
 - During World War II, the U.S. produced a short 1942 film, *Hemp for Victory*, promoting hemp as a necessary crop to win the war

About The Hemp Plant

- Industrial Hemp will grow nearly anywhere with little water and no pesticides, herbicides or fungicides
 - Hemp's taproot sinks deep to eight feet and aerates the soil
 - Hemp grows tall and lanky, up to 15 ft. high, dependent on the seed cultivar
 - It takes four to five months to grow hempseed and its oil

- Every part of the Industrial Hemp plant can be used
 - Various parts of the plant can be utilized in the making of textiles, paper, paints, clothing, plastics, cosmetics, foodstuffs, insulation, animal feed, and other products

About the Hemp Crop

- In Canada, hemp nets \$200 to \$400 per acre while in the U.S. soy and corn typically net less than \$160 per acre, (according to the USDA)
- Ideally hemp is processed within 100 miles of where it is harvested, so secondary businesses like processing and manufacturing follow hemp farming

Current Legal Status of Industrial Hemp

Although commercial hemp production ceased throughout North America in the late 1950s, there is renewed and strong interest in growing this crop. While the Industrial Hemp faces significant legal obstacles due to its close resemblance to the marijuana plant, there is movement at the federal level and there are a number of states working toward reviving the hemp industry.

In February of 2014, President Obama signed the US Farm Bill which contains an amendment to legalize hemp production for research purposes. The amendment allows State Agriculture Departments, colleges and universities to grow hemp, (defined as the non-drug oilseed and fiber varieties of *Cannabis*), for academic or agricultural research purposes, however it applies only to states where industrial hemp farming is already legal under state law. (New Mexico does not have such a law).

Since then, ten states have begun Industrial Hemp pilot programs. Those states are Colorado, Washington, California, Kentucky, Maine, Montana, North Dakota, Oregon, Vermont and West Virginia -- states with laws that permit research and development of hemp.

In addition, at the time of this writing, seven states have authorized research on Industrial Hemp. Those states are: Connecticut, Hawaii, Indiana, Nebraska, South Carolina, Tennessee and Utah.

What can New Mexico do to become an active participant in the emerging Industrial Hemp industry?

The first step in New Mexico's participation in the emerging Industrial Hemp industry is state authorization to grow Industrial Hemp. This would allow cultivation of Industrial Hemp under the research and pilot program provision, Section 7606, of the US Farm Bill.

Some facts about Industrial Hemp

- In 1611, the King James Bible was printed on hemp paper
- Original drafts of the Declaration of Independence were written on hemp paper, a crop that Thomas Jefferson and George Washington grew in large quantities

- The first American flag was made of hemp fabric and Levi Strauss's legendary denim jeans were originally made out of hemp
- Americans were legally bound to grow hemp during the colonial era and early republic
- The federal government subsidized hemp during the Second World War and US farmers grew about a million acres of hemp as part of that program
- President Clinton signed a National Defense Industrial Preparedness Executive Order No. 12919 - which listed HEMP among the essential agricultural products that should be stocked for national security purposes